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EDITORIAL NOTES

One of the features of the recent meetings was a tendency to enrich and liberalize the content of technical training of all kinds.

**A Broader
Interpretation
of Technical
Training**

"Teach our children to think, and we will risk the rest" summarizes the attitude of organized labor. How far this attitude has exerted a chastening and restraining influence upon the association an outsider could not judge. It was noticeable that the men chosen to represent the manufacturers were those who were able to approach the subject in the scientific attitude of the trained student. It must have been reassuring to the labor representative as well as to the educator to hear Mr. Alexander say, "Industrial education must prepare for both work and recreation" and also that "a rational apprentice system is nothing but a trade school," that, "skill, mental training, and character must result from this training," that "nothing but this is worthy the name under modern industrialism," and "skill must be accompanied by intelligence which animates all work and tells the why."

Certainly if the apprentice system or the trade school attains this result it will have succeeded where the public-school system has too often failed. There was unanimity as regards the proposition that the student should be made an independent thinker with the power not only to fit into conditions but also to *create* the conditions.

Discussion naturally developed variance of opinion concerning the most effective machinery for bringing about this result. There was encouraging recognition of the fact that the best kind of a school for one community was not necessarily the best kind for another, and an undercurrent of suggestions that the government should aid in experiments leading to the solution of the problem. In fact the speakers at this last meeting approached the question of industrial education as students who realized the weightiness of the problem and were willing to devote to it, time, money, and their best intellectual efforts.

To those of us who look upon the world through the windows of the schoolroom, the needs which have aroused this effort may not seem imminent. Our rank and file in school are kept busy on the task of caring for the 25 per cent. who do not drop out between the fifth and sixth grades, and we have enough to occupy our minds in providing in the best way for the 5 per cent. who remain through the high-school course. It is well, therefore, to see the situation through the eyes of those on the outside. To them it is a question of the most important of all assets—the intelligent workman. The Massachusetts report has been conspicuous in every discussion. The 18,000,000 children who in 1907 left the public schools between the fifth and sixth grades constitute a waste-product which for economic reasons alone must be redeemed.

The discussion so far seems to point to the conclusion that eventually technical schools must be articulated with the public-school system. The organization of the elementary curriculum along the lines of general industrial training would seem to be the logical beginning for such an organic system. With certain fundamental industrial experiences as a working capital, the trade school would have time to do its own work effectively without imposing the much-dreaded vocational idea upon the lower grades. If the school people realized the strategic importance of this they would hasten the reorganization of the curriculum. It is not possible, however, that a system which already has its traditions can effect changes rapidly enough to control the situation. Probably other states will rapidly follow New York in offering material encouragement to the trade schools. At the start they will be somewhat isolated, and it will take the double time of readjustment on both sides to bring them into effective harmony.

During the past year the society has more clearly defined its function. The first report of its Committee of Ten and the authorization of a special officer in the field indicate an active proselyting campaign. It is to be hoped that it will stimulate an equally careful consideration of the subject on the part of every teacher in the country.

L. S. C.